

Remarks/Arguments

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 3, and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Towers (6,099,060) in view of Hochman (3,739,919).

In response to this rejection, applicant amends Claim 1 to more clearly claim the applicant's invention arrangement of the fastening devices such that the longest fastening device is installed on a single surface of the device, the exterior surface, between the bungee tube ends, and smaller sizes are installed between bungee tube attachment openings and a bungee tube end, or between bungee tube attachment openings. This is a claimed feature of applicant's invention that places the entire length of all attached fastening devices in clear view on a single surface as means for identifying a desired size of fastening device. The Towers reference teaches away from applicant's invention by accommodating the larger sizes of bungee cords by hooking one end to the uppermost cross arm, extending them to the bottom of the device, and hooking the opposite end to a cross arm on the other side of the device (Col. 4 lines 6-15), thus placing a bungee cord on two surfaces of the device. This makes it more difficult to visually determine the length than applicant's arrangement. Thus neither the Towers reference, nor the combination of Towers and Hochman, teaches all limitations of applicants amended Claim 1, and therefore there is no prima facie obviousness, and amended Claim 1 is an allowable claim.

Claims 2, 3, and 4 are dependant claims on Claim 1 and therefore are also now allowable claims.

Also in the Office Action, Claims 5-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Towers (6,099,060) in view of Hochman (3,739,919) and Seyforth (2,868,386). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

In regard to Claims 5-16, these are dependent claims depending from Claim 1 and the addition of the Seyforth reference does not change the conclusion of the argument given above on Claim 1. The combination of the Towers, Hochman, and Seyforth does not teach all limitations of applicants amended Claim 1, and therefore there is no prima facie obviousness. Claims 5-16 are therefore allowable claims.

In regard to Claims 17-19, Claim 17 has been amended to more clearly claim means for identifying fastening devices of varying length. The argument advanced in regards to Claim 1 also now applies to Claim 17 and its dependent claims, and neither the Towers reference, nor the combination of Towers, Hochman, and Seyforth teaches all limitations of applicants amended Claims 17-19. Therefore there is no prima facie obviousness, and these are therefore allowable claims.

In regard to Claims 20-26, Claim 20 contains a limitation that the bungee tube length be selected such that the longest elastic fastening devices may be attached between the bungee tube ends. The argument advanced in regards to Claim 1 then also applies to Claim 20 and its dependant claims, and neither the Towers reference, nor the combination of Towers, Hochman, and

Seyforth teaches all limitations of applicants Claims 20-26. Therefore there is no prima facie obviousness, and these are therefore allowable claims.

In regards to Claim 27, it has been amended to more clearly claim means for identifying fastening devices of varying length by storage on the exterior surface of the invention. The argument advanced in regards to Claim 1 then also applies to Claim 27 and neither the Towers reference, nor the combination of Towers, Hochman, and Seyforth teaches all limitations of applicants Claim 27 and therefore there is no prima facie obviousness, and this is therefore an allowable claim.

Claims 20 and 24 are amended to correct matters of form.

Paragraph [0003] is amended to correct nomenclature and punctuation, and to clarify the identification of the fastening device end is accomplished by fastening them on a single external surface.

Paragraph [00012] is amended to replace the term “visual inspection” with “visual identification” to be compatible with paragraph [0003] and other description in the specification.

Paragraph [00049] is amended to add reference to figure 6, which was inadvertently omitted.

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims, as amended, have been shown to overcome all the examiners objections. The applicant submits the application is in condition for allowance, and that action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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